

Big, bold and beautiful to the web and back

Creative Software
Adobe Illustrator 10

by Lidka Schuch

“Not another upgrade!” I thought to myself when I got e-mail about an Adobe briefing on *Illustrator 10*. “Endless upgrades — endless problems to my system! I’ll have to get more RAM again. Mama mia, give me a break!”

That was the mood I was in when I went for the briefing...but once I had a chance to take a copy back to the studio and play with it, I was mesmerized.

1. A new look for the Tool palette.



RAM REQUIREMENTS AND IMPROVED INTERFACE

Version 10 of *Adobe Illustrator* is fully Carbonized, taking advantage of the OS X Aqua user interface (although it also runs fine under OS 9).

With only Mac OS base extensions turned on, the default *Illustrator 10* installation encountered no problems and placed 130MB of files on a Mac G4 hard drive—40MB more than *Illustrator 9*. RAM requirements also grew from a minimum of 40MB to 64MB, but of course this won’t be enough if you want to use all the nice new toys and effects. Once we gave it 100 MB, it ran faster than *Illustrator 9* ever had.

Tool palette icons have been redesigned to look more 3D. Unfortunately in the process they lost their graphic clarity. Now it is actually a bit more difficult to

visually distinguish one tool from another (Figure 1).

At least the names of the palettes in the Window pull-down menu have finally been organized alphabetically, so now it is easier to find the one you’re looking for (Figure 2). But there are still too many palettes (and no Option bar as in *Photoshop* to solve the problem).

SYMBOLS AND SYMBOL TOOLS

It would be worth getting this upgrade even if Symbols was the only new enhancement. You can make a Symbol (Figure 3) from any vector drawing (including compound paths, mesh objects, and gradient- and pattern-filled objects), pieces of text, raster images, or a composite of all of these. The concept of symbols was originally created to keep the file sizes small while making it easy to manage changes. Each instance of a symbol is only a reference to its original drawing. You can edit instances individually, but if you change the original drawing, you are also changing all instances in the file.

A key point is that not only can you share Symbols with any *Illustrator* document but if exported with SVG or SWF files they will also be recognized by *Macromedia Flash* or *Adobe LiveMotion*!

Doesn’t that sound good?

Good, but hardly original. Macromedia has used Symbols almost forever and it’s high time Adobe smartened up.

But what really sets *Illustrator 10* apart is the set of original (and fantastic) “Symbolism” editing tools developed by the Adobe team—there are eight Symbol editing tools in all:

The **Sprayer** allows you to create a set of symbol instances or add more instances to an existing set (Figure 4).

The **Shifter** lets you reposition symbol instances. You can also change the relative paint order of symbol instances in a set (Figure 5). Just hold down the Shift key to bring an instance to the front, or Shift-Option to send it to the back.

The Symbol **Scruncher** tool pulls symbol instances together or apart. Use this tool to shape the density distribution of a symbol set (Figure 6).

Sizer lets you increase or decrease the size of symbol instances in an existing symbol set (Figure 7).

Spinner orients (rotates) the symbol instances in a set (Figure 8).

Stainer colorizes symbol instances. Colorizing a symbol instance changes the hue toward the tint color while preserving the original luminosity. This means that black or white objects are not affected (Figure 9). To change objects with black or white fills, use the **Styler** tool.

The **Screener** tool increases or decreases the opacity of the symbol instances in a set (Figure 10).

Finally, **Styler** applies the selected style to the symbol instance (Figure 11).

To change the diameter of any of these tools, just use the square bracket keys ([]), just like in *Photoshop*. All keyboard shortcuts pertaining to the specific tool will be shown in the Symbol tool Options dialog window. To get it, double-click on the tool of your choice (Figure 12).

This set of tools can make artwork look so much more realistic in no time at all.

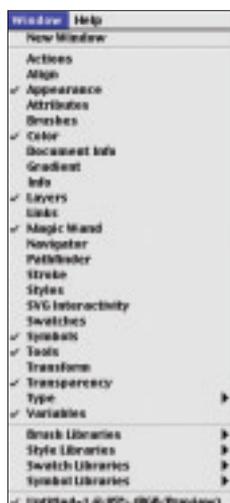
ENVELOPES, WARPS & LIQUIFY

Probably the most important additions to version 10 are Envelopes (Figure 13) and Warps (Figure 14) commands (finally!).

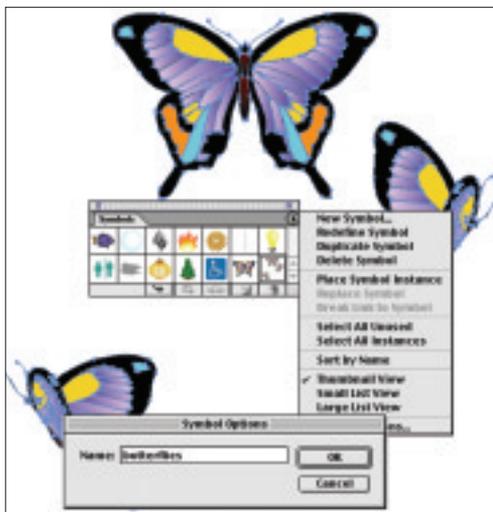
But beware: only Warps from the Effects pull-down menu are live-distortion commands (meaning that you can edit distorted text or objects without changing the appearance of the distortion). If you apply Envelope Distortion from the Object pull-down menu, you’ll have to release it first before editing text. But the bonus in using Envelopes is that, unlike Warps, you can make an Envelope from any object in any shape.

There are also seven new Liquify tools (Figure 15). These allow you to warp, twirl, pucker, bloat, scallop, crystallize and wrinkle vector artwork—but you *do* have to make outlines out of text and embed (or

2. Alphabetically organized palettes in the Window pulldown menu



3. To make a Symbol, select the artwork and choose the New Symbol command from the Symbols palette flyout menu or click the New Symbol icon on the Symbols palette or drag artwork onto the Symbols palette. Hold the Shift key while dragging if you wish to make an Instance from the original artwork. Symbols or their Instances can be released back to the original objects by using the Expand command from the Object pull-down menu. To edit a Symbol, select an Instance, click the Break Link icon on the Symbols palette, edit the artwork, and choose the Redefine command from the Symbols palette.



rasterize) bitmap images before using them.

And the new Magic Wand tool works just like *Photoshop's* Magic Wand—except that you can choose from even *more* options, such as fill and stroke color, opacity, etc. There is also a new Flare tool for creating flare effects on vector objects or embedded bitmap images. And four new drawing tools have been added—Line, Arc, Grid and Polar Grid.

Even the Pathfinder palette commands got revamped; now there are Shape mode commands and Pathfinder commands.

Remember how the Exclude and Intersect commands used to cut up original objects along overlapping lines? Now all commands from Shape mode preserve the original objects' shapes by making a compound path (Figure 16).

WHAT'S NEW FOR THE WEB

Illustrator 10 for the web has had another major facelift. First and most critical, version 10 has slicing capabilities. You can make slices based on guides or objects (Figure 17), or draw them manually using the Slice tool from the Tools palette.

In essence, this means that now you can design complete web pages

and save them directly from *Illustrator* with formats and coding needed for web output. You can save slices with HTML table coding, or even CSS layers coding (Figure 18)—but beware of the latter. It's great for design because it allows you to overlap objects with transparency, but not always great since not all browsers support CSS styles.

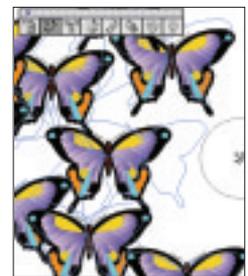
The new Variables palette (Figure 19) is also a major breakthrough in linking templates created in *Illustrator* to data in ODBC-compliant data sources. It means that (with a little help from AppleScript, Microsoft Visual Basic or JavaScript, of course) we can generate any number of output file variations, from high end printing down to web and PalmPilots—from the same template. This will be very useful, especially in high-volume multi-purpose publishing environments such as catalogue publishers, direct marketers or in-house corporate marketing departments.

The addition of Symbols also allows you to create much leaner SWF (*Flash*) files—even one-quarter the original size.

Illustrator 10 also features a new option for exporting SWF files with HTML coding so that the exported file will show its original dimensions with-



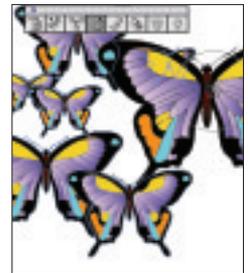
4. Symbol Sprayer.



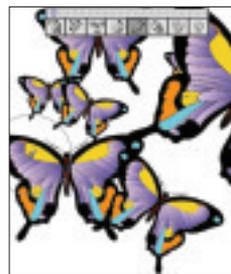
5. Symbol Shifter.



6. Symbol Scruncher.



7. Symbol Sizer.



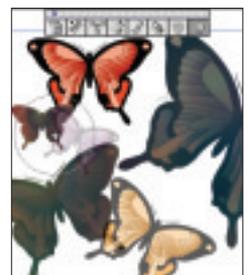
8. Symbol Spinner.



9. Symbol Stainer.



10. Symbol Screener.



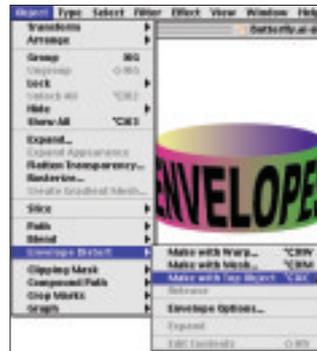
11. Symbol Styler.



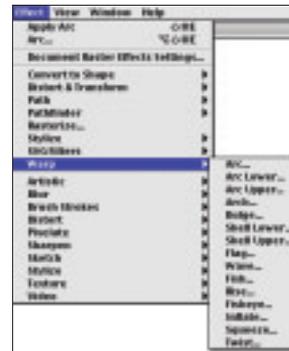
12. Symbolism Tools Options. Keyboard shortcuts for each Symbolism tool are listed with each individual tool options.



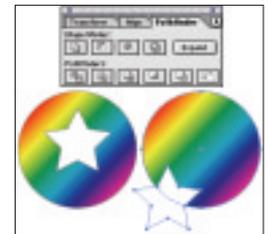
15. Liquify Warp, Twirl, Pucker, Bloat, Scallop, Crystalize, and Wrinkle tools. Hold down Option key to interactively change the size and shape of the brush.



13. Envelopes pull-down menu. You can make them from any closed path, mesh gradient objects, or using Warp presets.



14. Warps are live-effect presets of envelopes.



16. Pathfinder palette. All commands from Shape mode preserve the original objects' shapes by making a compound path. Expand button will divide or unite objects along the overlapping lines in the old Pathfinder manner.

out any extra code editing (Figure 20). But creating SVG (Scalable Vector Format) graphics still requires the services of a JavaScript programmer to add code to the graphics which are created in *Adobe Illustrator 10*.

The good news is that now you can import SVG graphics created in any SVG editor. As well, a fully editable *Illustrator* document can be included with exported SVG graphics, making it a smooth round trip between designers and developers.

Illustrator 10 also supports SVG live effects (you can find these in the Effects pull-down menu). The advantages of using SVG effects over regular effects and filters really show up in web design only—SVG effects don't get rasterized until they are displayed in a browser, so they look great at any size.

USABILITY AND COMPATIBILITY

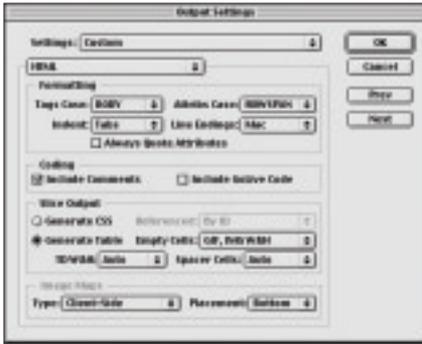
Another new feature in *Illustrator 10* is Workgroup Management. But to use the workgroup management features, you must be able to connect to a WebDAV server. You can find more detailed information and the latest news about WebDAV at www.webdav.org.

And the transparency printing controls, found in the Document Setup dialog window have been greatly refined but at the same time more difficult to understand by the average designer.

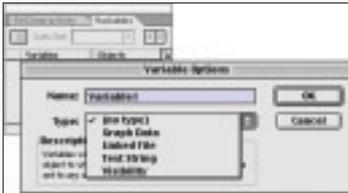
But one thing that's clear is that application integration has grown tighter and tighter with each upgrade of every Adobe program. *Illustrator 10* works seamlessly with *Adobe GoLive* for web design—slices exported from *Illustrator* are maintained in *GoLive*, and you can even change their op-



17. Make Slices commands.



18. You can save slices with HTML table coding, or even CSS layers coding. But beware of the later—not all browsers versions understand CSS styles.



19. New Variables palette.



20. Saving as SWF (Flash) window now has more options.

timization settings without returning to *Illustrator*. Double-clicking on *Illustrator* files you have added using the Smart Object feature in *GoLive* will launch *Illustrator* and allow you to edit these files there. And then—it will update the information in *GoLive*.

When you export *Illustrator 10* artwork as blend sequences to *Adobe LiveMotion*, you can animate them in *LiveMotion*. And, as in *GoLive*, when you double-click an *Illustrator* file in *LiveMotion*, you can then edit it in *Illustrator* and the changes will be reflected in *LiveMotion*.

And if you want to automate your production workflow, the new Variables feature in *Illustrator 10* in conjunction with *Adobe AlterCast* software will let you replace the variables in the templates you design with ODBC-compliant data (with a little help from web programmers).

Illustrator has always worked well with *Photoshop* for high end printing, but now you can also link *Photoshop* files containing rollovers and animations and import them. But the only real printing improvement is the long awaited compatibility with *InDesign* vector paths. At last you can copy and paste objects not just from *Illustrator* to *InDesign*, but also the other way. Live effects are also preserved when you bring native *Illustrator* files into *InDesign*.

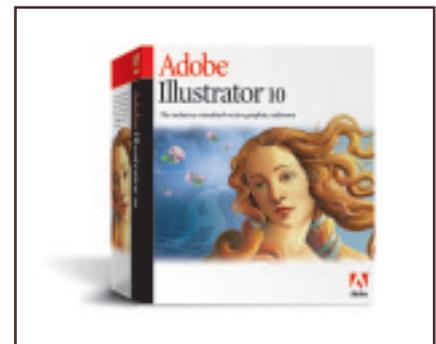
WISH LIST AND SYNOPSIS

Even in version 10, *Illustrator*—a member of the original Big Three of desktop applications that also includes *QuarkXPress* and *Adobe Photoshop*—still lacks the option to open multiple documents at one time using the Open command from the File pulldown menu; it is missing tools or commands for perspective grids or even simple 3D extrusion; and there is no keyboard shortcut for repositioning locked guides (missing since it vanished with version 8).

But aside from a few minor quibbles which may be solved with future upgrades, *Illustrator 10* is unquestionably a must-have—at least, from a creative point of view. New web design tools and improved compatibility with Macromedia software

are both major advances and worth the price of the upgrade. But what hasn't been answered yet is: will printers be able to RIP all these spiffy new effects? (For more on *Illustrator's* transparency effects in high end print workflows, see page 14, "Not Everything About Transparency is Apparent" by Lerrick Starr.)

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ADOBE ILLUSTRATOR 10

System Requirements

WINDOWS

- Intel Pentium II, III, or 4 processor
- Microsoft Windows 98, Windows 98 Special Edition, Windows Millennium Edition, Windows 2000 with Service Pack 2, or Windows XP
- 128 MB RAM

- 180 MB of available hard-disk space

- For Adobe PostScript printers: Adobe PostScript Level 2 or Adobe PostScript 3

MACINTOSH

- PowerPC processor: G3, G4, or G4 dual
- Mac OS system software version 9.1, 9.2, or Mac OS X version 10.1

- 128 MB of RAM

- 180 MB of available hard-disk space

- For Adobe PostScript printers: Adobe PostScript Level 2 or Adobe PostScript 3

Pricing

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